

How does a lighthouse work?

What's right at the very top?

Do all lighthouses look the same?



Where does the light come from?

What is a lighthouse for?

What does a lighthouse keeper do?

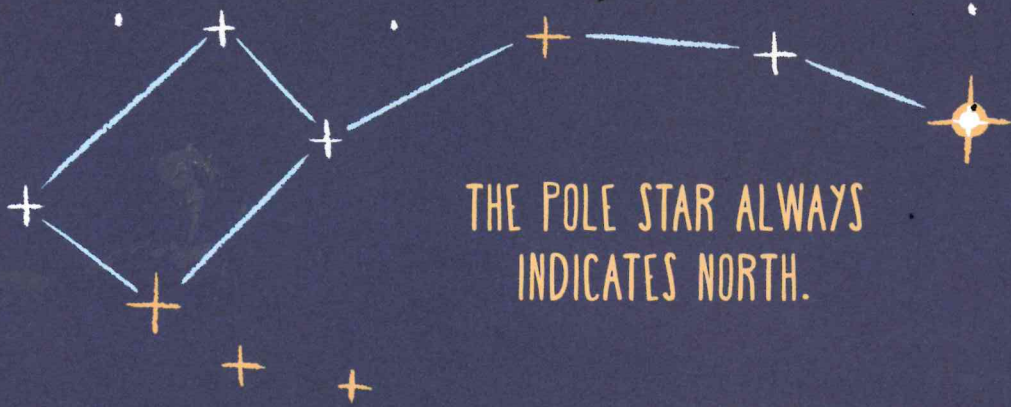
I have always wanted to live on a boat so I could sail along the coast and look at lighthouses. Lighthouses are my favourite type of building. They have been around since ancient times. I have always wished I could actually visit a lighthouse to find out how they work and to learn about the people who live in them. Today, the day has finally arrived. We're going on a school trip to visit a lighthouse! Will you come too?



WHAT IS A LIGHTHOUSE FOR?

A lighthouse is an important tool that sailors can use when finding their way on the water. The captain of the ship (the 'skipper') uses a chart to navigate but they need a landmark that is always in the same place, a bit like a road sign, so that they can set their course. The skipper might use the stars or a very tall mountain on the coast to check their position against the chart. But sometimes it is dark or the coastline looks the same for miles and miles. A tall tower with a bright light on top is a very useful marker for the skipper. These beacons also warn sailors of dangerous things such as wild rip currents so the boats can avoid them. Modern technology has changed the way that lighthouses work but they are still very useful to passing sailors.





THE POLE STAR ALWAYS
INDICATES NORTH.



A FIRE LIGHTS UP THE ENTRANCE TO A
HARBOUR IN THE DAYS BEFORE ELECTRICITY.